Communication Matrix Planning: Activity 1

What do we know about this student that will impact communication?

Student: Date: Team Members:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Describe what you know about the individual’s | **Are there implications for communication?** | | **For any area marked YES:** **EXPLAIN** factors which could affect communication modes or materials at targeted Matrix level. (visual or tactile sign/ pictures or tactual symbols/ point or eye gaze/movement of head or limbs)  If you are unsure about any of the areas, the team should observe, collect data and come back to this to adjust intervention strategies. |
| YES | NO |
| VISION |  |  | **How might this impact communication interventions?**  ***(For example:*** *If visual acuity is a problem, making things bigger, better contrast, need tactual materials, reduce distance, filling in gaps of concept development because of lack of incidental learning. Is there field loss? If CVI, can the individual process 2-D materials, need a reduced array, need color highlighting, need extra time to process…)* |
| HEARING |  |  | **How might this impact communication interventions?**  ***(For example:*** *Can the individual access/understand spoken language, need assistive listening devices, associate sounds and objects? How does noise impact expressive and receptive communication?)* |
| GROSS MOTOR SKILLS |  |  | **How might this impact communication interventions?**  ***(For example:*** *Does the individual need special positioning to access visual or auditory input, or make a response? Are there range of motion/tone issues that could impact communication?)* |
| FINE MOTOR SKILLS |  |  | **How might this impact communication interventions?**  ***(For example:*** *Does the individual have the physical ability to reach, manipulate, accurately touch a display of icons or objects?)* |
| AVAILABILITY FOR LEARNING |  |  | **How might this impact communication interventions?**  ***(For example:*** *Does the individual’s bio-behavioral state make it difficult to attend/respond because he/she is often drowsy, agitated, asleep, engaging in self-stimulatory behaviors, upset?)* |
| TRUSTED RELATIONSHIPS |  |  | **How might this impact communication interventions?**  ***(For example:*** *Is the individual aware of people around him/her; does the individual interact with people or a special person with attention, imitation, pleasure- or with resistance, aversion)?* |
| CONCEPTUAL SKILLS |  |  | **How might this impact communication interventions?**  ***(For example:*** *Does the individual understand the objects used in activities of his/her day? Does the individual understand what is about to happen when an activity is begun? Does the individual understand that a symbol can represent something is about to happen?)* |
| RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE |  |  | **How might this impact communication interventions?**  ***(For example:*** *Does the individual understand commands, or anticipate activities through touch cues, object or picture symbols, words, signs, facial expressions?)* |

Activity 2- Team Discussion: What did we learn? What is important now?

**For the Matrix you just completed, respond to the following questions:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| What is the individual’s primary level of communication competence? What is the highest level where most intents are mastered? | Level I II III IV V VI VII |
| Does the student have mastered skills at other levels? | YES NO  If yes, what levels? I II III IV V VI VII |
| Does the individual present with emerging skills at other levels? | YES NO  If yes, what levels? I II III IV V VI VII |
| Are there important gaps in mastery at lower levels which should be addressed? (some level IV skills are inaccessible for individuals who are blind and do not need to be addressed) | Level I II III IV V VI VII |
| Which communication behaviors (modes) should be targeted for expressive communication? Circle all to be targeted and elaborate: (Note: children should have multiple modes available to them in different contexts and environments. The specific mode for each activity will be determined within each routine.) | *sign, speech, tangible symbols, use of device, unconventional gestures, conventional gestures, body movement, facial expression, body tone* |
| Which communication modes are most effective for receptive communication with this individual? | *sign, speech, tangible symbols, modeling use of device, gestures, touch cues, facial expression* |
| Are there particular messages (intents) which should be targeted? (Important to the individual- important for family)  Circle intents to target and elaborate below:  **Refuse:** Express discomfort - Protest - Refuse or Reject  **Obtain**: Express comfort - Continue an action - Obtain more - Request more of action/object - Request NEW action/object- Make choices -  Request absent object  **Social:** Express interest in others - Attract attention - Request attention - Show affection - Greet people - Offer things/share - Direct  someone’s attention to something - Use polite social forms  **Information:** Answer Yes and No questions – Ask questions - Name things or people – Make comments | |
| Are there communication skills that need to be addressed? Circle any that are important  *initiation of expressive communication - expansion of vocabulary - accuracy of signs, gestures or vocalizations* | |

Activity 3 - Choosing Goals

Use the information from Activity 2 to think about important goals for this year. Are there specific intents (messages) you want to focus on? Are there gaps that need to be addressed? Are there modes of communication or specific messages that need to move from emerging to mastered by reducing prompts, expanding environments/activities? Use the worksheet below to target specific messages and describe the level at which it should be target and the mode.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Message/Intent | Priority (high/moderate/low) | Targeted Level | Targeted Mode | Targeted Skill |
| *Example: make a choice* | *moderate* | *IV* | *Point to real object* | *In more activities when choices are presented on choiceboard* |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

Consider the [generic level goals from the Communication Matrix](https://drive.google.com/file/d/17CMiWU2Lx2DA9m_UScS6SQ4NHBdAjjS4/view?usp=sharing) and at [Communication in Action](https://www.communication-in-action.org/35106_1). Look back at the targeted messages and modes above and write 3 communication goals for the individual: (X will touch a picture from 3 symbol array to request a toy, X will shake head to indicate NO when asked a question, X will find and give me the object cue representing finished to indicate desire for a break)

1.

2.

3.

Activity 4: Developing an Intervention Plan

Develop a plan for each goal with steps that can be followed consistently. Think about the response you want the individual to make (e.g.- speak, sign, touch a picture or object cue, use a device, gesture, smile, look toward….) and how you will let individuals know it is their turn to do something without doing it hand-over-hand (e.g., verbal prompt, a signed prompt, an object or picture cue, or model the desired response). Finally, whether they responds correctly or incorrectly, what response will you make to confirm their response? (clap hands, “good job”, sign “yes”, / co-actively make the desired sign, reduce complexity of the array, model desired response and try again). You can use the form provided here, or another routine form you are used to, as long as it will allow all staff members and family members to work on this goal using consistent cues and responses.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Goal | Positioning and environmental considerations | Strategy or cue to encourage / elicit communicative behavior | Response/behavior you are looking for: What is the individual expected to do?  \*\*For symbol users- How will you check comprehension? | How will you give the individual specific feedback (praise or correction)? |
|  |  | Establish joint attention  Establish topic  Make request in format individual can understand  Wait for individual to process | Correct response | Correct response |
| Incorrect response | Incorrect response |

(This form is from Reach for the Stars, J Grisham-Brown and D. Haynes. Available from the American Printing House for the Blind)

Activity 5 - Embed Goals into Daily Activities

Now think of some activities where you can practice these communication skills. Think about how you might alter the activity to build in opportunities for the individual to have a communicative exchange, either with an adult or with a peer. (The Design to Learn Inventory is a great tool for this- www.designtolearn.com if you need help) Try to find 2-3 activities in the day to address each of your communication goals.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Activity | Communication goal(s) we can address | What will you do to create a communication opportunity in this step? |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Ensuring Consistency among Partners | How do we share information among the team? |  |
| Providing a Responsive and Supportive Environment | How do we keep everyone alert and responsive to ANY communication? |  |
| Analysis and Decision- Making Based on Data | How do we monitor and respond to the individual’s performance? |  |

Activity 6 - Putting it into Practice